

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method, comprising the steps of:  
providing a set of predetermined function definitions  
5 which are different;

storing a project definition that includes: a  
plurality of function portions which each correspond to one  
of said function definitions in said set, and which each  
define at least one input port and at least one output port  
10 that are functionally related according to the  
corresponding function definition; a further portion which  
includes a source portion identifying a data source and  
defining an output port through which data from the data  
source can be produced, and which includes a destination  
15 portion identifying a data destination and defining an  
input port through which data can be supplied to the data  
destination; and binding information which includes binding  
portions that each associate a respective said input port  
with one of said output ports; and  
20 automatically initiating execution of said project  
definition in response to a change to data in said data  
source.

2. A method according to Claim 1, including the steps  
25 of:

causing said data source to automatically generate a  
trigger in response to a change to data therein;

causing said data source to automatically transmit  
said trigger through a communications link; and

30 responding to receipt of said trigger through said  
communications link by effecting said initiating of  
execution of said project definition.

5           4. A method according to Claim 3, including the step  
selecting as said public communication protocol the  
eXtensible Markup Language (XML) protocol.

15 Internet.

7. A computer-readable medium encoded with a computer program which recognizes a set of predetermined function definitions that are different, said program being operable when executed to facilitate:

5 storing of a project definition that includes: a plurality of function portions which each correspond to one of said function definitions in said set, and which each define at least one input port and at least one output port that are functionally related according to the  
10 corresponding function definition; a further portion which includes a source portion identifying a data source and defining an output port through which data from the data source can be produced, and which includes a destination  
15 portion identifying a data destination and defining an input port through which data can be supplied to the data destination; and binding information which includes binding portions that each associate a respective said input port with one of said output ports; and

20 automatic initiation of execution of said project definition in response to a change to data in said data source.

8. A computer-readable medium according to Claim 7, wherein said program is operable when executed to effect  
25 said automatic initiation of execution in response to receipt through a communications link of a trigger automatically generated and transmitted by said data source in response to a change to data therein.

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11. A method, comprising the steps of:  
providing a set of predetermined function definitions  
which are different;

storing a project definition that includes: a  
5 plurality of function portions which each correspond to one  
of said function definitions in said set, and which each  
define at least one input port and at least one output port  
that are functionally related according to the  
corresponding function definition; a further portion which  
10 includes a source portion identifying a data source and  
defining an output port through which data from the data  
source can be produced, and which includes a destination  
portion identifying a data destination and defining an  
input port through which data can be supplied to the data  
15 destination; and binding information which includes binding  
portions that each associate a respective said input port  
with one of said output ports; and

automatically initiating execution of said project  
definition in response to receipt through a communications  
20 link of a trigger expressed in a public communication  
protocol.

12. A method according to Claim 11, including the  
step of selecting as said public communication protocol the  
25 eXtensible Markup Language (XML) protocol.

13. A method according to Claim 11, including the  
step of configuring said communications link to include a  
network.

14. A method according to Claim 13, including the  
step of configuring said network to include a portion of  
the Internet.

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15. A method according to Claim 13, including the step of causing a network browser program to respond to a manual input event by effecting the transmission of said trigger through said communications link.

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16. A computer-readable medium encoded with a computer program which recognizes a set of predetermined function definitions that are different, said program being operable when executed to facilitate:

5 storing of a project definition that includes: a plurality of function portions which each correspond to one of said function definitions in said set, and which each define at least one input port and at least one output port that are functionally related according to the  
10 corresponding function definition; a further portion which includes a source portion identifying a data source and defining an output port through which data from the data source can be produced, and which includes a destination  
15 portion identifying a data destination and defining an input port through which data can be supplied to the data destination; and binding information which includes binding portions that each associate a respective said input port with one of said output ports; and

20 automatic initiation of execution of said project definition in response to receipt through a communications link of a trigger expressed in a public communication protocol.

25 17. A computer-readable medium according to Claim 16, wherein the said public communication protocol in which the trigger is expressed is the eXtensible Markup Language (XML) protocol, and wherein said program is operable when executed to accept said trigger in said eXtensible Markup Language protocol.